

Greeks and has raged ever since. We would seem just now to be in the thickest of the fray. The faults of the prevailing system are apparent. There are, as usual, many standing by the wayside to tell us of them. There are also those waiting to apply a remedy and carry forward the burden to the next turn of the road. The trend of criticism now and always in nursing affairs has shown faults of character for which the home is responsible to be far greater than faults of technical education. The absolute lack of established standards in the training-schools has made it possible for great numbers of undesirable applicants to be admitted, that the work of the hospital might be done cheaply. Oftentimes these women have been sincere and honest, according to their light, but the lack of home culture and education has made them constantly subjects for criticism in the outside world, which has brought them conspicuously before the public, and all members of the great nursing body have been estimated at their value.

The steps that have been taken by the nursing organizations to apply a remedy to this recognized condition in the hospitals, is the cause of the present pronounced agitation in nursing affairs.

Criticism of nurses individually and collectively is being heard at every turn, but for a remedy for the evils which exist, and which no one denies, we must go back to the cause.

We shall range the discussion of this subject in three heads: the defects of the training-schools, the faults of medical teaching, and the responsibility of the great nursing body, and we shall take up the discussion of the whole broad subject of nursing education in detail during the new year, which begins with our next number.

State examinations now being held in different sections of the country are revealing both the weak and the strong points in the situation, which give a definite basis upon which to work for improved conditions.

The responsibility is threefold; the reforms cannot be carried to a successful issue through the influence of any one of the factors mentioned. Criticisms, to be of value, must propose a remedy.

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### ONE OF THE REASONS WHY NURSES FAIL

A FRESH instance of the credulity which makes so many people believe in shams has come to our notice recently, and is especially deplorable because of its source.

A certain "Correspondence School of Nursing" has advertised in the *Mothers' Magazine*, and a trained nurse, hoping that the "Moth-

ers" would stand for genuine things, wrote to the magazine explaining the essential mischievousness of correspondence schools in nursing. The reply she received was a most astonishing example of "logical" deductions based upon an absurdly erroneous hypothesis. Starting with the assumption that the "book-learning" was the most important thing (one almost wishes that text-books and lectures had never been heard of), it is easy of course to prove that time spent in practical work before going out to earn money is time wasted.

The case of the electrical engineer who learned his trade by correspondence was cited. Oh, Mothers! Can you see no difference between electric lights and the sick and suffering body of the patient, animated by a complex soul? Alas, that in the general adulteration of our day brains also seem to be adulterated! We own to deep discouragement at this attitude of the magazine, which probably both represents and influences a large class of mothers.

And now truth demands being told about those same mothers, for it is owing to the slack and slovenly ways of too many of them and to their easy-going acceptance of all manner of adulterated and sham products, that so many of the young women now applying to our training-schools are not capable of doing good, honest, reliable work—that they cannot keep their surroundings clean and orderly, that their rooms look like pawn-shops, their ink is everywhere except in its bottle, their clothing is cheap and elaborate, their closets and bureau-drawers a nightmare. These inefficient mothers, who feed their families on adulterated foods, dose them with quack medicines, dress them in cheap sweatshop products, encourage them to go into "quick and easy" money-earning occupations,—what do they think are the duties of a mother? The wild mothers of the forest all teach their children efficiency in their modes of existence, but not so, the human well-to-do, average middle-class mother, who enjoys a leisure which she puts to no good use. Her house keeps itself, her younger children are pert and spoiled, her older ones are inconsiderate of others, not thoughtful, not gracious and charming, not useful, not deft, not industrious. No wonder they are attracted to cheap and easy get-trained-quick methods.

A good home training is equivalent to a technical school—yes, better. Not long ago we met a carpenter, one of the genuine kind, who took a pride in his work and loved to do good work with his hands. His son has lost his fingers through an accident and the father said simply: "Ain't it a pity. He can't never work with his hands. He'll have to get educated." There's a whole moral in that, for the mothers.